



interACT at Pentagon Builds SAPR Awareness

ARLINGTON, Va. (August 25, 2015) – Marines, Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Coast Guard and National Guard members as well as civilians – participated in interACT at the Pentagon on July 23rd to further increase awareness of sexual assault intervention measures. Sponsored by the Department of the Navy (DON) Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) Office, the interACT acting troupe engages members of the audience in frequently encountered situations to educate them on what can happen and how to respond.

Two sessions of the interactive training were held. Jill Loftus, Director of the DON SAPR Office provided opening remarks at a morning session and Mike Stevens, Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy, hosted the afternoon session. Among the things demonstrated were intervention before an assault, how to respond to a victim who has disclosed an assault to you, and how to negate the “voices in a victim’s head”, or residual antagonists, that lead to a victim blaming themselves. “The two most important things that anyone can convey to a survivor of sexual assault is that you believe them and you take what happened seriously”, said Karoline Hay, MARFOR SARC for MCICOM.

interAct is unlike any other SAPR training. Rather than passively absorbing information, the audience participates with the actors to implement their ideas about how to intervene. A key theme conveyed by the actors is that sexual assault prevention is a matter of leadership.

The interACT training helped continue to build SAPR awareness and education that was heightened in April – designated Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month – during which the Walk-a-Lap activity and several guest lectures on the topic were held for the Pentagon community. Help for sexual assault victims is always available from Sexual Assault Response Coordinators (SARCs), Victim Advocates, and through the Department of Defense Safe Hotline.

Watch for additional SAPR education opportunities at the Pentagon in the months ahead.

For more information on Sexual Assault Prevention and Response, visit www.sapr.mil. For more information about MCICOM, please contact the Public Affairs Officer, Marine Corps Installations Command, Rex Runyon (rex.runyon@usmc.mil).

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